

## **Litter on State Highways**

May 2007

Prison work crews, Adopt-a-Highway volunteers and UDOT employees are constantly removing debris and litter left on our roads by motorists. We spend more than \$1,000,000 annually to pick up and dispose of highway litter. Additionally, in urban areas, we spend \$800,000 per year sweeping debris left on the road. Every year litter pick-up costs and disposal fees increase due to additional roadside litter.

60% goes for UCI Prison crews - they cost about \$500 per day (Guards, truck, porta-potty, trailer, and inmate wages). 25% goes to pickup and dispose of the orange bags that Prison Work Crews and Adopt-a-Highway groups gather up. The remainder goes for UDOT crews picking up litter and roadside debris.

UDOT trucks travel about 150,000 miles hauling orange trash bags to the dump. About 8,000 truck loads (One-ton size) of litter hauled to landfills around the state annually. UDOT pays dumping fees for most of the debris hauled off the road. We use orange trash bags because they are so visible and tend to remind motorists of how much debris there is on the roadside. In 2006 UDOT used 99,600 trash bags. Each bag holds 12.2 cubic feet of litter. Our "haul" in FY2006 was 45,000 cubic yards of litter. That's enough litter to cover a football field 45 feet deep.

The biggest problems are on freeways and multilane arterials - especially in urban areas. Roads to recreation venues are also particularly hit hard at times. The volume of trash seems to decrease with the distance from convenience stores, fast food outlets and major big-box retailers.

Truck driver generated debris is another separate problem localized to interstate ramps.

It is not what we pickup for that \$1.8 million - it's what we don't get picked up that is the problem.

With our current practices and enforcement, roadsides get re-littered in as little as six weeks. Some, like SR-201 west towards the Salt Lake County landfill fill up even faster.

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### UDOT Litter Pickup

Region	Expenditures for 2005	Expenditures for 2006	Expenditures for 2007
Region One	\$189,815	\$206,127	\$232,962
Region Two	\$509,320	\$798,351	\$1,023,280
Region Three	\$281,300	\$325,420	\$337,177
Price District	\$100,006	\$89,084	\$73,000
Richfield District	\$189,915	\$206,020	\$210,666
Cedar District	\$139,590	\$153,121	\$153,905
Total	\$1,409,946	\$1,778,123	\$2,030,990

### In 2005 Region 2 Spent The Following Amounts On The Selected State Routes

Route	Litter Pickup Cost
I-80	\$125,834
I-15	\$91,719
1-215	\$73,992
Bangerter Highway	\$31,087
SR-201 2100 South Freeway	\$26,866
SR-111 Bacchus Highway	\$14,972
SR- 224 Park City	\$4,024

If funds were available, UDOT could spend up to \$4,000,000 on state wide litter pickup each year. The additional funds would be used to contract for more labor. Presently the best price for contract labor is our state prison crews, we pay approximately \$850 a day for an eight person crew. This cost covers the guard, Port-a-potty, transportation and about one dollar per hour for the prisoners.

The adoption of a highway program has also been a big help in many areas to reduce the cost of litter pickup. UDOT spends about \$80,000 a year to support this program.

